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The Santa Fe New Mexican

# New report details possible housing, workforce shortages near Las Vegas after fire



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Jun. 12—The issues mounted as the Las Vegas Community Foundation began to assess the damage caused by the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon Fire.

Some of the small communities just north of Las Vegas, N.M., including Pendaries Village and Rosiada, some of the first affected by the fire when it raged out of control in April, were left devastated by the blaze. Many homes in the area still do not have electricity or running water.

"Now that the community and the region is transitioning from the emergency relief to looking at long-term recovery, we're gonna have to address, what you could call, some structural problems," said Elmo Baca, the foundation's chairman, citing issues that existed even before the fire swept through.

The foundation released an analysis last week listing some of the major challenges in the recovery effort. Among the problems the foundation identified:

- \* A severe housing shortage, even before the fire.
- \* Significant problems with the power grid that were exposed by the fire.
- \* Threats to water and a need for reforestation.
- \* Difficulty obtaining homeowners insurance and high insurance rates.
- \* A decreased population, which strains local businesses and local governments and means fewer students in schools — and therefore less money for school districts.

Baca said the foundation has distributed about \$250,000 so far in grants to local nonprofits helping with the recovery efforts.

Among them are MainStreet de Las Vegas, which is supporting families with \$250 cash grants for basic needs; and the Comedor de San Pascual

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